

First Broadway, Now Hollywood for Dubuque

Atmosphere Footage for Film Version of "Pajama Game" Shot in Mississippi River City

By Nadine Subotnik
Illustration Editor

DUBUQUE — On the night of May 13, 1934, Dubuque burst on the Broadway scene. And now this Mississippi river town is going into the movies.

When "The Pajama Game" had its premiere that May night in 1934, it put on stage a musicalized version of "7½ Cents," a novel about a Dubuque-like town by Dubuque's Richard Bissell.

The show was a smash hit from the first. Night after night people have crowded into the St. James theater to enjoy its story about labor-management troubles in a pajama factory and a boy who loves a girl on the opposite side of the fence and who courts her with some very delightful music. ("Hey, There," "Hernando's Hide-away"—remember?)

Hollywood looked and it liked and Warner Brothers bought.

For Authenticity.

Tuesday Hollywood (and Broadway) moved directly into Dubuque to insure that the movie will be authentic—the river, the bluffs, the railroad and the industrial section that extends along them.

Shooting on "Pajama Game" will begin in Hollywood Nov. 28. But one day of location shooting took place in Dubuque Tuesday—to get the backgrounds and the over-all Dubuque picture.

In Dubuque for the event were Bissell, who will team with George Abbott to write the movie adaptation as he did the play, and his family. They now spend most of the year in the East but were back on the river last summer.

Here, too, was John Raitt, handsome young singing star who



IN THE CENTER of Dubuque's industrial district (at corner of Elm and East Eleventh) Broadway Star John Raitt repeatedly walked toward camera Tuesday. It was part of the footage that was shot in the river town for inclusion in the forthcoming filmization of "The Pajama Game".

(Photos on Picture Page.)

has played the "Pajama Game" hero on Broadway from its premiere and will carry over into the movie.

Here, too, were a number of Hollywooders headed by Director Stanley Donen, a dark and handsome young man who has turned out such previous movie musical hits as "On the Town" and "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers".

Morning's Work.

With help of technicians from St. Louis and Dubuque and some Dubuque citizens who suddenly found themselves movie extras, they shot footage from dawn until shortly after noon.

Then the Bissells settled back for a few days on their house boat (properly two house boats), where the head of the house has been reading galley proofs on his new novel about show business, "Say Darling".

This weekend they'll be off to Chicago for some festivities in connection with the opening of another Broadway musical hit, "Damn Yankees". And after another short stint in Dubuque they'll be traveling westward.

Meanwhile, Raitt returned to New York, hoping to be there in time to celebrate Halloween with his kids, and a brief vacation. He's been out of the New York cast only two weeks, but I enjoyed every night of the show," he said Tuesday. "It's such a wonderful thing, so full of life

you just couldn't get tired of doing it."

First Major Film.

This will be the first major movie assignment for Raitt, who has been one of the stage's most important musical stars for many years.

Many Midwesterners will remember him as Curly in the Chicago company of "Oklahoma". After that came the male lead in Broadway's "Carousel". And since 1934, he has been occupied with "Pajama Game" and scattered TV appearances.

His leading lady in the filmization of "Pajama Game" will be Doris Day, who will have the role created on Broadway by Janis Paige.

Most of the other principals will be from the original Broadway cast—including Carol Haney, the dancing and comedy role that brought her fame, and Eddie Foy, Jr.

When plans for filming "Pajama Game" were first laid out, there was no intention of traveling to Dubuque for any of it. But Hollywood soon discovered an awesome fact—there was no spot in Southern California that looked quite like a Midwest industrial area.

So Director Donen traveled to Dubuque several months ago and took a quick survey of the situation. There he found just what he was looking for, of course, and

he took some pictures of likely spots for location shooting and headed back to Hollywood.

Last week the vanguard of the Hollywood location unit arrived in Dubuque to get the movie set-up ready to go.

Start at 5:30 A.M.

When Raitt came in Monday night, everything was set. And so Tuesday at 5:30 a.m. shooting began with a panoramic view of Dubuque from the top of the cable car that runs from Fourth street to Fenelon Place—a sunrise view that everyone promises will be a technicolor lulu.

Most of the other scenes were shot at various points in the factory area. Extensive footage was also taken of Raitt as he walked along the tracks that skirt the Mississippi at the harbor area.

How many miles did he walk as the camera shot long views and closeups? No one knew, but at shooting's end he was striding along as jauntily and good-naturedly as ever.

Dubuque had been informed that Hollywood was coming, but no definite schedule was released on where the shooting would be.

When the unit was in the factory area, spectators gathered, of course—it doesn't take long for Hollywood cameras start grinding.

But the visitors worked quietly and efficiently, taking take after take in their usual fashion.

The Bissells followed along, the author as quietly unobtrusive as one suspects he is generally.

And the spectators were an in-terested and respectful audience to this day when Dubuque went into the movies.

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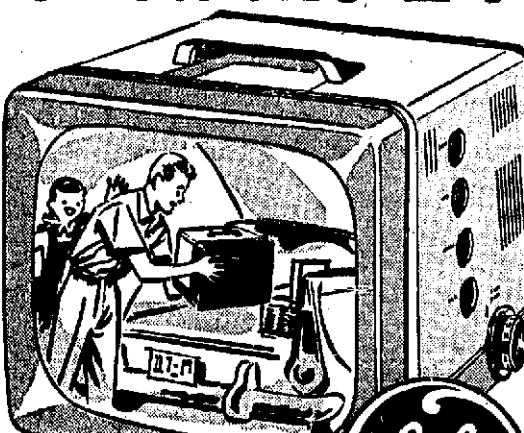
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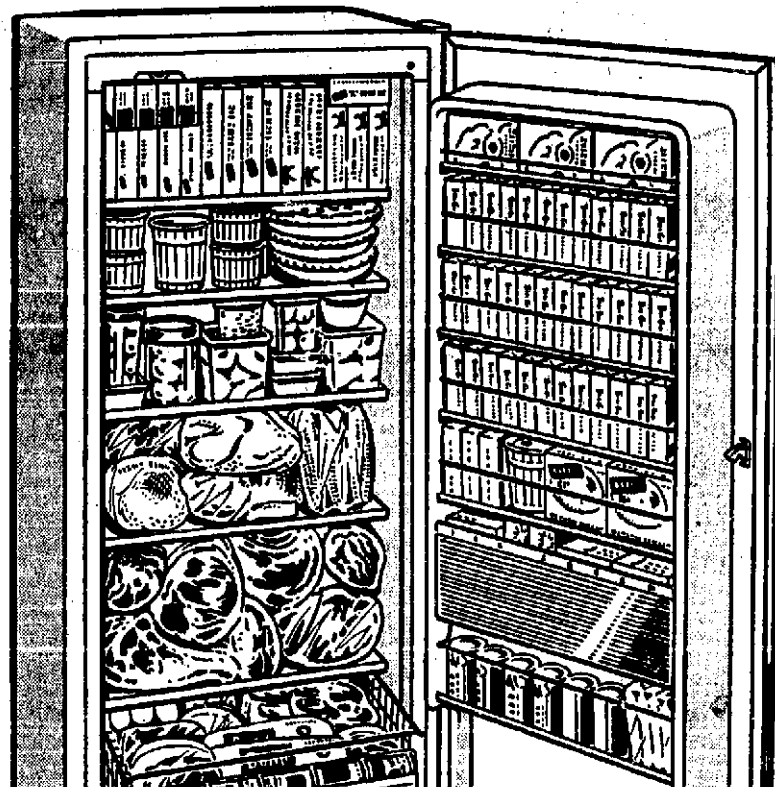
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